

I am writing in support of maintaining the current 35 percent limit on the audience reach the nation's largest broadcasters may control nationwide. This broadcast ownership cap, is critical to the independence and diversity of our nation's media.

The four major television networks, GE/NBC, Viacom/CBS, Disney/ABC, and News Corp./Fox, maximize their profits by getting their nationally-oriented programming in front of the largest national audience possible, which maximizes advertising revenue. These companies therefore have no incentive to support or promote locally oriented programming that would be more interesting and even draw more market share in a my community at a particular point in time.

It is critical that these national companies not be allowed to be so large through ownership of too many local channels that they can dictate programming that does not meet the needs and tastes of my local community. Clearly, local broadcasters with no national profit-maximizing motives are better positioned to be responsive to their local communities. Preserving the 35 percent broadcast ownership cap helps achieve this objective.

The FCC must preserve this and other rules that were intended to provide multiple media owners and voices in a market. Greater consolidation among media giants could reduce the assortment of voices and opinions that are essential to a healthy democracy. If any of these six rules is seriously weakened, one company in a town could control the most popular newspaper and TV station, giving it an excessive control over the local news and information the public sees and hears.

Such a move would reduce the diversity of cultural and political discourse in a community. It could also raise costs for businesses that use local media for advertising. I believe in preserving the 35 percent broadcast ownership cap.

Sincerely,

Ben Levin